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SERMON

DELIVERED AT BRIDGEWATER,

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AT THE

ORDINATION

OF THE

REV. DAVID LEONARD

TO THE

WORK OF AN EVANGELIST.

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AN

Ordination Sermon.

2 TIMOTHY iv. 5.

——*Do the Work of an Evangelist.*—

THE Office and Work of a miniſter of the Goſpel, muſt be conſidered as moſt ſacred and important. He is indeed a meſſenger of the Lord of hoſts, an ambaſſador of Jeſus Chriſt, commiſſioned and ſent by him to preach the everlaſting Goſpel to a dying world. Hence we ſee the propriety of the apoſtle's ſolemn charge in the context. I charge thee (ſaith he) before God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who at his appearing and kingdom ſhall judge the quick and dead, *preach the word.*—How calculated this ſerious addreſs, to call up and fix the attention of Timothy. Preach the word, be inſtant in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-ſuffering and doctrine.

This ſolemn charge was inforced by ſeveral weighty conſiderations, ſuch as the preſence of the great God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt the final Judge. Alſo, the approaching decline of the

ſtate of religion. For, ſaith the apoſtle, the time will come, when they will not endure *ſound doctrine*—but ſhall turn away their ears from the *truth*, and ſhall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure affliction, *do the work of an evangeliſt*, make full proof of thy miniſtry: for I am now ready to be offered, I ſhall ſoon be releaſed from theſe bonds in which I am now held as a priſoner;—the time of my departure is at hand. And although I have neither ſtrength, nor courage of my own, yet through grace I have fought the good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs; which the Lord the righteous Judge ſhall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them alſo who love his appearing. Surely words could not be clothed with more ſolemnity; nor duty urged by reaſons more important.

This dying, but triumphant addreſs of the apoſtle, can hardly fail of exciting in the breaſt of every faithful miniſter, the moſt ardent deſire to emulate this holy man. I have finiſhed my courſe, ſaith he; I ſhall no more travel from place to place, to make known a Saviour's love. The time of my departure is at hand. I muſt ſhortly put off this tabernacle; and ye all among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, ſhall ſee my face no more. But thou my ſon Timothy, be ſtrong in the grace which is in Chriſt Jeſus; and with all watchfulneſs, patience, and diligence, *do the work of an evangeliſt*.

In order to aſſiſt your inquiries upon the preſent occaſion, we ſhall attempt to conſider,

I. The Office of an Evangeliſt.

II. The neceſſary Qualifications. And

III. The important Work.

I. Then, we are to conſider the Office of an evangeliſt.

This Office has been thought by many, to have been below Apoſtles and Prophets; and above Paſtors and Teachers; and alſo, to have been extraordinary, and to have ceaſed with the apoſtolic age. But whether this opinion were juſtly founded on ſcripture evidence, will more fully appear as we proceed.

The term *evangeliſt*, is derived from a *Greek* word, which ſignifies *a meſſenger, or carrier of good tidings*. And to whom can this title be applied with more propriety, than to miniſters of the Goſpel, who are ſent with the glad tidings of ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt?

The word *evangeliſt*, is but twice uſed in our tranſlation excepting in the text. The firſt is in the account given of Paul and his company, who came to Ceſarea, and entered into the houſe of Philip the *evangeliſt*. * Whether he were ſo called to denote his office, or to diſtinguiſh him from an apoſtle of the ſame name, is not certain. The account given of him, is, That he was driven out of Jeruſalem by Paul while a perſecutor, and that he fled to Samaria, and preached the word in that city; and baptized thoſe who became converts to Chriſtianity. From thence he went towards Gaza, and in the way he joined the Ethiopian's chariot; preached Jeſus to him, and baptized him. And after this he was found at Azotus, and paſſing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Ceſarea.

There is nothing in this account, that would lead us to ſuppoſe Philip to be above ordinary Paſtors and Teachers. He preached the Goſpel, and baptized thoſe who were converted under his miniſtry. Do not ordinary Teachers do the ſame? He did not lay hands upon them in order to their

* Acts xxi. 18.

receiving the Holy Ghoſt, as that was not the work of ordinary miniſters, but left that for the apoſtles to do.

Beſides, he is ſaid to be one of the ſeven of whom mention is made Acts vi. 5, who, from the nature of their appointment have generally been thought to be Deacons. And no perſon it is preſumed, would attempt to prove *their office* to be above *Paſtors* and *Teachers*.

The other inſtance, is in Paul's account of the Gifts beſtowed on the Church by her aſcended Lord, Who *gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors and Teachers.** The argument, in favour of the opinion now under conſideration, is principally drawn, from the order in which the Gifts are here placed. But it does not appear concluſive, any more than the *Papiſtical* argument in favour of the Priority and Supremacy of Peter, becauſe he is mentioned before the other apoſtles. They could not all be mentioned firſt.

We will now, my dear hearers, conſider this office more particularly as it relates to Timothy. He is charged in the text to *do the work of an evangeliſt*. Hence it is evident he was of this character. But what propriety would there be, in giving the ſame things in charge to ordinary Teachers, which were given to evangeliſts, in caſe they were far above them in office? It is preſumed, Paul would not have charged Timothy to have done the work of an *apoſtle*; unleſs he were ſatisfied, that the *ſigns* of an apoſtle, could have been wrought by him. †

Have not the two epiſtles to Timothy and the one to Titus (who were both evangeliſts) been conſidered by Chriſtians in every age, as a principal directory to miniſters? And has there ever been a charge given when ſetting them apart to the ſacred office, that the ſentiments, and much of the language

* Eph. iv. 11. † Acts v. 12, and 2 Cor. xii. 12.

were not taken from these epistles? I conclude not. If the office of an evangelist were extraordinary, and ceased with the apostolic age, there would seem a manifest impropriety in giving the same things in charge to ministers of the present day, which were given to them.

Although I would not rashly leave the beaten path, or renounce the judgment of those, to whose superiour learning and abilities I owe a deference; yet I will hazard an opinion, that the principal difference between an Evangelist, and Pastors and Teachers, was this; the former was sent to itinerate from place to place, and spread the glad tidings of salvation far and wide; also occasionally to administer ordinances; * whilst the latter had the charge of some particular Church or Flock, and their administration more immediately confined to them. †

The account given of Timothy, well agrees with this idea of an evangelist. He was a companion of the apostle in his travels; and was sent by him to *Corinth*, *Philippi*, and *Thessalonica*. But whether he ever had the pastoral care of the church at Ephesus is disputed. It is however certain, that the apostle left him there for a season, and afterwards called him away. ‡ He might indeed have itinerated for a season, and afterwards taken a particular charge.

From these observations, we hope to be freed from the charge of impropriety, in applying the office of an evangelist, to any Christian Minister ordained at large. We therefore proceed,

II. To consider the *Qualifications* for this office.

The leading, and absolutely necessary qualifications of a preacher, consist chiefly, in *natural gifts*, a heart *sanctified by grace*, a good degree of *acquired knowledge*, and a *special call* to the work.

* Acts viii. 12, 38. † Chap. xx. 28. ‡ 1 Tim. i. 3. and 2 Tim. iv. 9.

We begin then with natural Gifts: for where the foundation is not laid in nature, there is little reaſon to expect the deficiency will be ſupplied, either by *grace* or *art*. Grace may ſanctify, and Art may improve; and yet neither fully ſupply the want of natural abilities. We are all members of one great body, and every member has its proper office; but to put a member in a place for which it was never deſigned in nature, would evidently make a ſchiſm in the body. And perhaps one reaſon, why ſo many perſons appear to ſo little advantage in the world, is becauſe they act out of their proper place.

Among the natural Gifts neceſſary, we may obſerve firſt, a clear and comprehenſive *underſtanding*. A perſon who cannot readily underſtand the nature of a propoſition, or feel the force of an argument, cannot be qualified to teach others. Whatever confuſion of ideas may be in his own underſtanding, the ſame will attend his communications to others.

Without that clearneſs of underſtanding, which ſhall enable him in ſome good degree, to comprehend the general ſyſtem of revealed Truth, he will be conſtantly liable to give wrong conſtructions, and preach inconſiſtencies. We may next add,

Sound judgment. Some there are, who appear to have a conſiderable ſtock of knowledge and information; and yet want judgment to uſe it to their own advantage, or to communicate it in a profitable acceptable manner to others. Every thing is beautiful in its ſeaſon. The want of judgment to time things properly, often prevents their good effect; and ſometimes occaſions great confuſion. A preacher ought to be able to judge when to ſpeak, and when to refrain from ſpeaking. When to *rebuke*, and when to *conſole*; when to *reprove*, and when to *exhort* and comfort his hearers.

To a clear underſtanding and accurate judgment we may add, a *retentive memory*. It will be acknowledged however, that all uſeful teachers are not bleſſed alike with this gift. But as the Goſpel is ſaid

to be committed to earthen veſſels, it is preſumed they will retain in their memories, much of its precious treaſure. The mind richly furniſhed with *truth*, will enable the preacher to bring out of this treaſure, things both new and old. Beſides, if a perſon were to begin to ſtudy the oracles of truth, and could not retain in memory each part, how could he connect the whole? If he were to read in the Revelation of John, the glorious triumphs of the conquering Redeemer; and that he hath upon his veſture a name written—KING of kings and LORD of lords; he might forget that the ſame Perſon had been mentioned in Geneſis under the character of the *ſeed* of the woman, which ſhould bruiſe the ſerpent's head.

But ſome there are, no doubt, who can think accurately, and form to themſelves a rational ſyſtem; and yet cannot communicate their ideas in an eaſy, inſtructive manner to others. Hence it is neceſſary that they ſhould be *Apt to teach*. This may be conſidered as a natural gift, rather than any thing acquired. This neceſſary trait in the miniſterial character was not omitted by the great apoſtle.

Aptneſs to teach, does by no means conſiſt in an empty loquacity; nor in a man's being able to tell all that he knows: but in his being able to arreſt the attention of his audience (not for the moment to make them ſtare) but to hold the mind in pleaſing captivity; and by a ſoft, irreſiſtable eloquence, to infuſe ſentiments of truth into the ſoul; and in ſuch a manly, rational manner, exhibit ideas to the underſtanding, as ſhall leave the moſt indelible impreſſions. But good natural abilities, and a bad heart, would but furniſh a man to do miſchief; therefore we proceed,

2. To conſider *Grace*, as an important qualification in a teacher. By grace, we mean a gracious principle implanted in the ſoul, producing holy affection: for a graceleſs preacher of the Goſpel of the Grace of God, would ſeem a very inconſiſtent character. We cannot ſuppoſe that the all-gracious Redeemer would

employ Wolves to watch over, to feed and comfort his Lambs.* How can a perſon teach another the way, which he never knew himſelf? May he not properly be called a blind Leader of the blind? Or how could he deſcribe the infinite evil of ſin, which he had never ſeen, or ſhow the expoſed ſituation of the ſinner, if he had never felt it himſelf? And how faintly would he deſcribe the infinite charms and lovelineſs of a Saviour, whoſe beauty had never attracted his heart! "It would be extremely difficult," ſaid an ingenious Writer, "for a man to perſuade me, that he was anxiouſly concerned for the ſalvation of my ſoul, who never took any care of his own. †"

The miniſter of the Goſpel, is not to direct inquiring ſouls to *go* to Chriſt; but to invite them to "*come* and ſee;" which ſuppoſes, he has found, and is in poſſeſſion of the good he recommends. But he muſt add to his faith, not only virtue, but knowledge alſo.

Which brings us,

3. To conſider, what *Acquirements* are neceſſary. He that teaches the knowledge of God to mankind, can never have too much information himſelf. Yet ſome particular acquirements are more eſpecially neceſſary. As firſt, a thorough knowledge of the ſyſtem of revealed Truth. The inſpired Scriptures, are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs; that the man of God may be thoroughly furniſhed unto all good works. No other knowledge can make up a deficiency in this. It was

* The inſtance of Judas, has often been mentioned by thoſe who plead for graceleſs miniſters, as authorizing ſuch a procedure: "For," ſay they, "Chriſt choſe him among the reſt." It is true he choſe twelve, one of whom he ſaid was a devil; and it may be remembered there was a prophecy to be fulfilled, which none but a devil, or one under his influence, could accompliſh; for no real friend could have betrayed and ſold Chriſt for thirty pieces of ſilver. But however, if any chooſe to be conſidered as the ſucceſſors of Judas, we ſhall not pretend to controvert the juſtice of their claim.

† Locke on Toleration.

ſaid of Timothy, that from a child he had known the holy ſcriptures, which are able to make him wiſe unto ſalvation, through faith in Chriſt Jeſus.

Next to the knowledge of the truth, which we preach, we may ſuppoſe it neceſſary to have a good underſtanding of the language which we make uſe of in our adminiſtrations. Although Paul did not affect excellency of ſpeech, or uſe inticing words of man's wiſdom; yet he exhorted Titus to uſe *ſound ſpeech*, that could not be condemned.

The knowledge of the *dead languages*, though highly deſireable, is not thought abſolutely neceſſary. For although Chriſt upon certain occaſions, and for particular purpoſes, beſtowed the Gift of tongues upon the apoſtles; yet even at the day of Penticoſt, we have no reaſon to ſuppoſe they ſpake with any more tongues, than there were perſons of different languages to hear them. Nor is it certain that they had this Gift at all times, to make a wanton uſe of at their own pleaſure. There is leſs evidence ſtill, that ordinary teachers, even of the apoſtolic age, were favoured with the gift of tongues. But however, if any are ſo highly favoured as to ſay with the apoſtle, "I thank my God I ſpeak with tongues more than you all;" let them not forget that he adds, "yet in the Church I had rather ſpeak five words with my underſtanding, that by my voice I might teach others alſo, than ten thouſand words in an unknown tongue." *

Alſo, a good knowledge of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, is to be conſidered as a very neceſſary and intereſting acquirement. From this ſource, we are able to trace the footſteps of the flock of Chriſt back to the early dawn of Chriſtianity. We learn what ſcenes of diſtreſs the Church has paſſed through; what perſecutions ſhe has endured for his name's ſake, and not fainted. Alſo, what Declenſions and Reformations have ſucceeded each other; together with the accompliſhment of ſeveral ſcripture prophecies.

* 2 Cor. xiv. 18, 19.

It will be granted that there are many other uſeful acquirements, though not ſo abſolutely neceſſary to qualify a perſon to preach the Goſpel. Such as a general knowledge of the Arts and Sciences, and of human nature. Theſe are to be conſidered as uſeful appendages, rather than conſtituent parts. But although a man were poſſeſſed of all the accompliſhments which have now been deſcribed, yet "How ſhould he preach except he be ſent?"* Which brings us,

4. To conſider the *Call* to this important work. No man taketh this honor unto himſelf, but he that is called of God.—And though we do not expect miniſters in the preſent day, to be called and qualified in the ſame extraordinary manner as the apoſtles were; yet undoubtedly if they would claim that precious promiſe, "Lo I am with you;" they muſt be ſatisfied that Chriſt has called them to the work.

There are various opinions reſpecting the nature of this Call; and what are ſufficient evidences of it. Some have ſuppoſed, that a *deſire* for the ſalvation of ſouls, and to ſee the Redeemer's intereſt advanced, is a ſufficient warrant to engage in the work. But theſe deſires are not peculiar to miniſters; all good men have them in a greater or leſs degree; and eſpecially young converts, when they are firſt brought to the knowledge and love of Chriſt, have ſtrong deſires that others ſhould enjoy the ſame happineſs; but we cannot ſuppoſe every good man called to be a preacher. Others confide in that ſtale maxim, vox populi, vox Dei; but we are aſſured, that the people have often choſen falſe prophets to prophecy ſmooth things, whom God ſaid he had not ſent, and that they prophecied lies in his name.

But may we not rather conclude, that thoſe whom Chriſt Calls, he firſt fixes their heart upon the work; ſo that like Moſes they are willing to forego the pleaſures of a court, and ſuffer affliction with the people of God. And although the Church may appear like the

* Rom. x. 15.

burning bush, they are willing to devote themselves to its service.—We may also suppose that a treasure of the word is committed to them; so that they may say with the Prophet, His word is in my heart as a burning fire in my bones, I am weary with forbearing, and I cannot stay.* It is not the prospect of worldly pomp and glory; but the love of Christ which constrains them to preach. A dispensation of the Gospel being thus committed to them, they feel a necessity laid upon them to preach it.

These impressions of truth upon the mind, together with the coincident events of divine providence, will undoubtedly afford satisfactory evidence respecting a Call to this work. And if like Paul they are not disobedient to the *heavenly call*, they may hope for the approbation of their God, whilst they cheerfully and faithfully, do the work of an evangelist.

From this brief view of the Office and Qualifications of an evangelist, we proceed,

III. To consider the Work.

This work is principally contained, in the solemn charge in the context; *Preach the Word.* To preach the word undoubtedly implies, the whole system of doctrines revealed in the Bible.—It will be natural to begin,

1. With the Being of a God; as the belief of this article is the foundation of all religion.

The light of nature, as well as the written word, asserts his being and perfections. Whereever we turn our eyes we are struck with evident marks of divinity. As when we view a curious machine, and observe how the complicated parts move and act upon each other, we at once infer, that it must have been constructed by some designing agent. In like manner when we behold the stupendous system of the universe, the regular order, harmony, and established laws by which all the

* Jer. xx. 9.

parts of this vaſt machine move and act; we feel the irreſiſtable evidence, that it could not be the work of *undeſigning Chance*; but of the all-wiſe, and powerful Jehovah.

And although by the viſible things which are made and ſeen, is underſtood his eternal Power and Godhead; yet it hath pleaſed God to make more clear and familiar diſplays of himſelf in his word. Herein he hath revealed himſelf in the character of Triune God. A Trinity in Unity. Reaſon and Philoſophy, have pretended either to comprehend or reject the inexplicable truth; but ſtill it remains a part of the word which we have to preach.

I ſhall not attempt a full elucidation of the doctrine, but content myſelf with mentioning two or three paſſages of ſcripture, which appear to me clearly to aſſert it. John declares, that there are *Three* that bear record in heaven, The FATHER, the WORD, and the HOLY GHOST, and theſe THREE ARE ONE. The apoſtle Paul in his benediction upon the Church at Corinth, bleſſed them in the name of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*. Peter addreſſed his brethren, as Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the *Father*, through ſanctification of the *Spirit*, and ſprinkling of the blood of *Jeſus Chriſt*. Thus we find the apoſtles agreed in aſſerting this ſublime, this incomprehenſible truth.*

It has been a queſtion with ſome, Whether the ſcriptures attribute perſonality to the Spirit? To which it may be anſwered, that Chriſt, when ſpeaking of the Spirit, uſes the perſonal pronouns, *He*, and *Him*. I will ſend HIM unto you, and when HE is come, HE ſhall not ſpeak of HIMSELF, &c.

It will not hence be concluded, that the Chriſtian believes in three Gods, nor in one God and two emanations; but in One God in Three Perſons.

We are not only to preach that God *is*, but that he

* 1 John v. 7. 2. Cor. xiii. 14. 1 Pet. i. 2.

is a *rewarder* of all them that diligently ſeek him. In his word he hath revealed his lovely perfections, and proclaimed his name to be The Lord, The Lord God merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth. Keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin; and that will by no means clear the guilty. Who is a God like unto him, That pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſions of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, becauſe he delighteth in mercy.*

The New Teſtament writers declare that God is *love*; and that he ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him might not periſh but have everlaſting life. And that God is in Chriſt reconciling the World unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them.

2. In *preaching the word*, it may be neceſſary next to bring into view the character of man, and conſider him in his preſent fallen ſtate. It is evident he is not what he once was. God hath made man upright, but they have ſought out many inventions. When he firſt came out of his Creator's hand, he was like his other works, pronounced good.—But not long after God declared that All fleſh had corrupted his way;—and that every imagination of the thoughts of the heart was only evil continually.† David, in a very ſtriking manner, thus deſcribes the infidelity and depravity of man, The fool hath ſaid in his heart there is no God. And when the Lord looked from heaven to ſee if there were any which ſought after God; it was ſaid, They are all gone aſide, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no not one. § The whole head is ſick, and the whole heart faint. ‖ The ſcriptures are full of this doctrine; and daily, melancholy obſervation, evinces the truth of it.

But it is not enough for a preacher to tell men that they are depraved: it is neceſſary to tell them what

* Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. and Mic. vii. 18. † Gen. vi. 5—12.
§ Pſa. xiv. 1, 3. ‖ Iſa. i. 5.

depravity consists in. There are many who are willing to allow that they are depraved, but at the same time consider this as an excuse for their wicked conduct. Such persons should be told, that depravity does not consist in the loss of any of the *natural faculties* necessary to love and obey God; but in a wicked *indisposition* to that which is right; and a fixed, voluntary bias to that which is evil. And the reason why wicked men do not love moral beauty and excellence, is not from any defect in the natural faculties, but the want of a right disposition of heart. The sinner cannot love God, because he hates him; and he hates him, because he chooses to hate him. He does not come to the light, because he loves darkness rather than light. ‡ The wretchedness of man in his fallen state, does not consist in the loss of natural abilities, but in the want of a right disposition to improve them; and is not to be considered so much his misfortune, as his crime.

This being the nature of depravity, it is easy to see the absurdity of pleading it as an excuse, for our remaining impenitent, or neglecting to comply with whatever God requires. Our being indisposed to that which is right and fit, can never lessen our obligation. Our obligation to love and serve God, does not arise from our disposition to love; but from our capacity, and the suitableness of the Object. Therefore, so long as our capacity for loving moral excellence remains, and God continues to be worthy of the Love, Reverence, and Esteem, of rational beings, our obligation must continue. Hence we are led to say with the Apostle; The law is holy, and the Commandment holy, and just, and good; but *we* are carnal, sold under sin. In which state we should for ever remain, if infinite goodness did not interpose.—Which leads us,

3. To observe, that in preaching the word, or doing the work of an Evangelist, it will be necessary to hold up to view the covenant of Redemption, as including the Atonement made by Christ.

‡ John iii. 19.

It is evident from the ſacred writings, that He who calleth things which are not, as though they were; and who clearly ſees the end from the beginning, did foreſee that ſtate of guilt and ruin, in which ſin would involve the World. Therefore, God early entered into covenant with his Son, to redeem from guilt and miſery the choſen race.

One intereſting article of this covenant, was, That the Son of God's love, ſhould in the fulneſs of time be born of a woman; and that he ſhould be *made under the* ſame *law* which man had tranſgreſſed, that he might Redeem them which were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons.* This great affair was tranſacted in the Perſon of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who left the height of celeſtial glory, and took on him the form of a ſervant; and being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death. †

Chriſt, in order to magnify the Law and make it honourable in the view of all intelligent beings, yielded the moſt unreſerved and perfect obedience to its precepts; and teſtified that one jot or tittle of it ſhould never fail 'till all were fulfilled. This he did not from neceſſity, but of a willing mind. "Thy law," ſaid he, "is in my heart. I delight to do thy will, O God." This perfect obedience of our glorious Redeemer to the divine law, abundantly demonſtrated that the law was good. And in this way, as well as by his doctrine, he condemned ſin in the fleſh.

But, it was not the ſpotleſs purity of his nature, nor the perfect obedience of his life, that could make Atonement for the tranſgreſſions that were under the firſt covenant.‡ The Lamb of God muſt bleed. This commandment he received of his Father, to lay down his life. ‖ Hence the blood of Chriſt is called the *blood of the covenant*, and of the *everlaſting covenant*. §

* Gal. iv. 4, 5. † Phil. ii. 7, 8. ‡ Or Teſtament. See Heb. ix. 15. ‖ John x. 18. § Zech. ix. 11. Heb. xiii. 20.

This blood ſpeaketh better things than that of Abel.

Whether this Atonement, made by Chriſt, be ſufficient for the Whole human race, or only a part; or whether the Redemption is to be conſidered *General* or *Particular*, has long been diſputed. If we include in Redemption the deliverance of the ſubject, it is, undoubtedly, *Particular*; but if nothing more be meant, than ſatisfaction to the Law of God, it ſeems more conſiſtent to conſider it *General*. That Law muſt have been completely honoured to ſave one of the human race: it required no more to ſave millions. It will not be ſuppoſed that Chriſt ſuffered for ſinners individually; for A, a certain quantity, for B, leſs, and for C, more; for then muſt he have often ſuffered ſince the world began; but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf. And by this one-offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified. It therefore follows, that thoſe who embrace the ſalvation of Chriſt, will have a whole Saviour, as completely as if only they were ſaved. And on the other hand, thoſe who reject Chriſt, will be guilty of rejecting and ſetting at naught the whole of his merit and ſufferings.

From this view of the ſubject, the preacher of the Goſpel will feel himſelf at liberty, to ſpread far and wide the name of the Saviour; and invite the ends of the earth to look unto him and be ſaved. ‡ He will tell the periſhing ſinner, that he that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved; and he that believeth not ſhall be damned. He will urge it as the *command of God*, that *all men every where repent*. * And will encourage the penitent ſinner to hope in the mercy of that Saviour, in whom we have *redemption through his blood*, even the forgiveneſs of ſins.†

Whilſt we meditate upon the wonders of redeeming love, and proclaim the efficacy of the blood of the Croſs; we feel our ſouls expand with gratitude to the

‡ Iſa. xlv. 22. * Acts xvii. 30. † Col. i. 14.

Lamb that was ſlain, and exclaim with the Heavenl
hoſt, Thou art worthy to take the book and open th
ſeals thereof; for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeeme
us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, an
tongue, and people, and nation. *—But we haſten,

4. To ſhow the neceſſity of the *influences of th
Spirit*, to regenerate, and form the heart anew.

Notwithſtanding the rich, and ample proviſio
which God has made for the ſalvation of ſinners; an
the friendly overtures of mercy, contained in th
Proclamation of the Goſpel; the heart of the ſinne
ſtill retains its native enmity. And the Preacher o
ten has to make the melancholy complaint, Lord wh
hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm
of the Lord been revealed? Like his Divine Maſter
he preaches, that men muſt be born again. At th
ſame time he knows, that the Spirit, (though like th
wind, it blows where it liſteth) muſt effect the work
He knows that the Holy Spirit muſt take of the thing
of Chriſt, and ſhow them unto his people, or they wi
never know them ſavingly.

This will lead him to feel his dependence o
God, and to be much in prayer for the influences o
the Spirit to accompany his adminiſtrations, that the
may be profitable to his hearers. Always bearing i
mind that Paul may plant, and Apollos water; but
is God alone who can give the increaſe. If the mini
ter of Chriſt is bleſſed with ſucceſs, he does not at
tribute it to his own ſkill or exertions, knowing tha
"it is the Spirit that quickeneth;" and nothing ſho
of the "Spirit of him that raiſed up Jeſus from th
dead," can effect the work. And whatever preten
ſions any may make of being the children of God wh
are not influenced by his Spirit; he is aſſured, tha
"as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they ar
the ſons of God." We come,

5. To obſerve, That the preacher in doing th
work of an evangeliſt, will conſtantly inculcate upo

* Rev. v. 9.

his hearers, the neceſſity of *Repentance* towards God, and *Faith* in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. He will endeavour to imitate thoſe who went out and preached, that *men ſhould repent*. Nor will ſpare to uſe the plain language of his Saviour, and tell the thoughtleſs Epicure, and the ſelf-deceived hypocrite, with all other impenitent ſinners, that Except they repent they ſhall all likewiſe periſh. He will tell them, that true repentance is a Godly ſorrow for ſin, ariſing from a ſenſe of the holineſs and purity of the divine law; and from the infinitely evil, and odious nature of ſin. He will urge repentance, as preſent duty, and not direct the ſinner to a courſe of preparatory exerciſes, in order to fit him for it.

The preacher will inforce this duty by ſhowing the expoſed ſituation of the impenitent, and the utter impoſſibility of their enjoying heaven with ſuch a ſtate of mind. Motives to this duty may be drawn from the Divine Commands which enjoin it; the goodneſs of God which leads to it; and the certainty of death, where repentance will be hidden from their eyes. And leſt any ſhould be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of ſin, and ſo remain impenitent, he will tell them that The ax now lies at the root of the trees, and every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit will be hewn down and caſt into the fire.*

He will alſo connect with evangelical repentance, Faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Faith in Chriſt is not diſtinguiſhed from repentance, as proceeding from a different ſource or principle, but as being a different exerciſe of the Soul. Repentance, implies a view of the righteouſneſs, holineſs, and purity of God's Law; and a ſenſe of the juſtice, and equity of the ſentence paſſed on the tranſgreſſor; while Faith beholds the glorious Surety ſuffering the torturing pains of the ignominious Croſs, to make Atonement for the guilty; and thereby, becoming the end of the

* Matt. iii. 10.

Law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth. Faith is the evidence of things not ſeen, and the ſubſtance of things hoped for. It receives the truth upon the credit of Divine teſtimony; and cheerfully ſets to its ſeal, that God is true.

The neceſſity of *faith*, appears evident from the nature of things, as well as from the plain declarations of truth: for how could a perſon be influenced, either by the threatenings or promiſes of a Being, whoſe exiſtence he did not believe in. But the teſtimony of truth muſt be heard.

Mark, when, recording the great Commiſſion, authorizing the Diſciples to go into all the World and preach the Goſpel to every Creature, adds, He that *believeth* and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not, ſhall be damned.* And the Apoſtle Paul declared that he received grace and apoſtleſhip for the *obedience of faith* (or that men might believe) among all nations. † And, indeed, without faith, it is impoſſible to pleaſe God; for he that believeth not the record which God hath given of his Son, hath made him a liar. ‡ Which muſt be conſidered as a continued affront, offered to the Majeſty of heaven, ſo long as the ſinner remains in unbelief.

From this brief view of the nature, and neceſſity of faith, the miniſter of Chriſt will always be ready to give an anſwer to this anxious inquiry, What ſhall I do to be ſaved? He will anſwer as the Apoſtle did, Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved. Or ſhould any inquire what ſhall we do to work the works of God? The anſwer is ready, This is the work of God (or it is agreeable to his will) that ye believe on him whom he hath ſent. §

Nor will the faithful miniſter dare to treat the matter in ſuch an indifferent light, as to lead his hearers to ſuppoſe, that the only diſadvantage they will ſuffer

* Mark xvi. 15, 16. † Rom. i. 5. and xvi. 26. ‡ Heb. xi. 6. 1 John v. 10. § John vi. 29.

by not believing, will be the want of preſent comfort and ſatisfaction, whilſt they may ſuppoſe their eternal ſtate equally ſafe without it. No; but in the decided language of inſpiration he will tell them, He that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting life; and he that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

This *faith*, which the Goſpel requires, is ſomething more than the cold aſſent of the mind, that Jeſus is the Chriſt. The Devils have as good a faith as this. But the *faith* of the Goſpel, is a living active principle in the ſoul; it works by Love and purifies the heart. It not only truſts in the Saviour's me[rit] for pardon and Juſtification; but yields a moſt [wil]ful, and unreſerved obedience to all his comma[nds]. he

6. In further purſuing this glorious wo[rk] Preacher will endeavour, not only to have his heare[rs] found in the faith; but careful, and diligent in the *practical* part of religion. He will inſiſt on perſonal holineſs of heart and life, as the only rational evidence of grace. The ſoul cannot be poſſeſt of divine faith, and not act under the influence of it. I will (ſaid Paul to Titus) that thou affirm conſtantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works. ‡ And my Brethren, We muſt add to our faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge, temperance, patience, godlineſs, brotherly-kindneſs, and charity.

The prudent Teacher, will guard his hearers againſt error upon the right hand and left. On the one hand he will caution them againſt concluding, that it is of little conſequence what a man believes; providing, he leads a moral, inoffenſive life. He will endeavour to ſhow them, that it is neceſſary to *believe* right, in order to *act* right. On the other hand he will lead them to ſee, that an orthodox head, and a vicious heart, will never make a Chriſtian.

That faith which does not produce, or is not

* John iii. 36. ‡ Tit. iii. 8. 2 Pet. i. 6, 7, 9. † James ii. 20.

accompanied with good works, is dead. ‡ So alſo *thoſe* works which do not ſpring from love, and are not done in faith, cannot be good in a moral ſenſe.

Our good works however, are not to be conſidered as the Cauſe of our juſtification; but as the fruit and evidence of it. Hence it follows that faith and holineſs uniting their influence in the good man, produce thoſe moral and ſocial virtues, which adorn and beautify the Chriſtian character.

But it is not enough that we begin well, and run well for a ſeaſon, we muſt continue in well doing. Hence

7. The Preacher will inſiſt on Perſeverance, in [illegible] to enjoy the promiſe of eternal life. The juſt [illegible] by faith; but if any man draw back, my ſoul [illegible] no pleaſure in him, ſaith the Lord. Although [illegible] do not believe that any who are ſavingly renewed in the ſpirit and temper of their minds, will ever fall away ſo as to be finally loſt; yet they may greatly decline as to the real life and power of godlineſs. And if they become remiſs and unwatchful, they may be left to fall into temptation and ſin, ſo as to diſhonour God, and wound their own ſouls. But a Covenant-God will viſit their tranſgreſſion with a rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes; nevertheleſs, his loving-kindneſs he will not utterly take from them, nor ſuffer his faithfulneſs to fail.* Thoſe whom Chriſt hath loved with an everlaſting love, who have been drawn to him by his loving-kindneſs, he will continue to love to the end.

Nevertheleſs, Chriſtians ought to be exhorted to a vigorous and diligent perſeverance in holineſs, as neceſſary to their own comfort, and the edification of others. As men in general form their opinions of religion more from the lives of its profeſſors, than from the doctrines they profeſs. And the promiſe is, He that ſhall *endure* to the end, the ſame ſhall be ſaved.

Finally, the faithful miniſter will keep back nothing, that might be profitable to his hearers; he will not ſhun to declare the whole council of God; and will

‡ James ii. 20. * Pſa. lxxxix. 32, 33.

endeavour to keep himself pure from the blood of all men. He will preach Christ crucified, as the only foundation of hope; though it should be a stumbling-block to some, and foolishness to others.

8. And lastly. The Evangelist is not only to preach the word, but occasionally to administer the Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. In doing of which, he will conscienciously adhere to the institutions as they were delivered by Christ, and left on record in the New Testament. He will not knowingly administer either of the Ordinances to unqualified subjects, or in a way not particularly warranted by the institution; but will endeavor to keep them as they were delivered to the Church.

In the faithful discharge of this sacred office, he will deliver his own soul, and may be happily instrumental of saving those who hear him. He will enjoy the satisfaction of an approving conscience, and will be finally accepted of his Judge in peace.

Having thus briefly considered the Work of an Evangelist, as was proposed; we come now to close with a few words of address. It may be proper to begin with the Candidate for ordination.

My dear Brother; You are this day devoting yourself to the service of God in his temple; and in the presence of heaven and earth, solemnly consecrating your time and talents to the work of the ministry.

Your work, though highly pleasing and honorable, will be difficult and arduous. An Angel's strength would be insufficient for it.—But you have the promised influences of the Holy Spirit; and if Christ has called you to go and preach the Gospel, he has said, Lo I am with you.—

In discharging the important duties of your office, you must expect to meet with difficulties and trials; but if you go in the name and strength of your Master, you will be enabled to say, None of these things move me. I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.

You will permit me, dear Sir, to obſerve to yo
the words of Chriſt, in the firſt Commiſſion given t
his diſciples: Behold (ſaid he) I ſend you forth, a
Sheep in the midſt of Wolves; be ye therefore *wiſe* a
ſerpents, and *harmleſs* as doves. This wiſdom alone
would form a diſagreeable character. It might excit
fear and dread; but could never command love an
eſteem. You will therefore ſee the neceſſity of uniting
with it, the humble, harmleſs, loving diſpoſition of the
Dove, in order to form an engaging character; as thi
only will make us wiſe to win Souls. The ſervant o
the Lord muſt not ſtrive; but be gentle to all men
in meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves.

Your *motives*, my dear Brother, for engaging in
this ſacred work, are known only to God and your own
heart; but from your ſituation in life, and the advan-
tages you enjoy of a *polite and liberal education*; and the
little proſpect you have of worldly aggrandizement, in
preaching the doctrine of the Croſs, we are led to hope,
you are ſincerely deſirous of promoting the glory of
God, and the happineſs of your fellow-men. Your
early public profeſſion of religion; your pious walk and
converſation; together with the general approbation of
thoſe who have heard you, induce us to believe, that
Chriſt hath called you as a choſen veſſel, to bear his
name among the Gentiles.

If Chriſt were now to put the ſolemn queſtion to
you my Brother, which he once did to Peter; Simon
ſon of Jonas loveſt thou me? Could you lay your
hand upon your heart and ſay; Lord, thou knoweſt
all things; *Thou knoweſt that I love thee?* If ſo; go feed
his Sheep and feed his Lambs. Go in the ſtrength of
the Lord God, and faithfully Do the work of an
Evangeliſt. Endure hardneſs as a good ſoldier of
Jeſus Chriſt. Set your face as a flint; never fear the
frowns, nor count the ſmiles of a deceitful world.

Take heed to yourſelf, and to your doctrine.
Let that cheerful ſobriety, and decent gravity mark
your conduct, that no man may deſpiſe your youth.

But be thou an example to the believers, in word, in converſation, in charity, in ſpirit, in faith, and in purity. Let the religion you preach to others be exemplified in your own life.

If Chriſt has counted you faithful, and put you into the miniſtry, remember, to him you muſt give an account, when he ſhall judge the quick and dead.

May the ever-bleſſed influences of the Holy Spirit ſo accompany your labours, that you may have many ſouls given you as the ſeals of your miniſtry here, and which ſhall be as ſtars in your future crown of rejoicing. Finally, Be thou faithful unto death, and Chriſt will give thee a Crown of life.

My dear Brethren in the miniſtry,

What cauſe of thankfulneſs have we to the great Head of the Church, that he is ſtill raiſing up and ſending forth Laborers into his vineyard!

It muſt afford peculiar pleaſure, while we reflect that our Fathers who have borne the heat and burden of the day; whoſe hoary locks, and furrowed cheeks proclaim, that the time of their departure is at hand; to ſee that God is raiſing up young men to fill their their places.

The preſent ſolemnity brings to remembrace that happy day, when we publicly devoted ourſelves to the work of the miniſtry. But my Brethren, have we not melancholy occaſions to ſay, "We have been unprofitable ſervants?" Shall we not then be excited to greater watchfulneſs and aſſiduity, in our Maſter's Cauſe.

I doubt not Brethren, but amidſt all the darkneſs and trials of this preſent ſtate, you can cheerfully ſay, "We have a goodly heritage aſſigned us. The Lord is our inheritance."

Our time Brethren, is ſhort; it may be very ſhort; our work is great, and the reward glorious. Let us emulate the noble example of our glorious Redeemer, who, For the joy that was ſet before him, endured the croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame. May we keep ourſelves pure from the blood of all men; and at

laſt when we ſhall be called to give an account of our charge, may we be enabled to preſent our dear Flo[ck] and ſay, Here we are and the children whom thou h[ast] graciouſly given us. And through the merits of [our] Saviour, may we then find admittance into the joys [of] our Lord.

The preſent occaſion will alſo afford joy to all [the] pious friends of Religion, of every denomination.

My Chriſtian Friends; Your enlarged ſouls ha[ve] been taught to rejoice, in the general proſperity of [the] Redeemer's kingdom. You have not the ſad occaſi[on] this day to ſay, There are none of all the Sons of Zi[on] which ſhe hath brought forth, to take her by the han[d]. You ſee that God is raiſing up young men, and calli[ng] them into the miniſtry. You will remember th[at] miniſters are called *earthen veſſels*; and of themſelv[es] they are empty ones;—as ſuch therefore, let me intre[at] you to carry them in your addreſſes to the throne [of] grace, to the Fountain, to be filled, that they may com[e] to you in the fulneſs of the bleſſing, of the Goſpel [of] Chriſt. Our preaching will not profit you, unl[ess] our Maſter comes with us. For we preach not ou[r]ſelves, but Chriſt Jeſus the Lord; and ourſelves yo[ur] ſervants for Jeſus' ſake.

While God continues *us* to preach, and *you* [to] hear, may our improvement and happineſs be mutua[l]; 'till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of [the] knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect m[an], unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chri[ſt]; and are tranſlated from theſe abodes of ſorrow a[nd] darkneſs, into thoſe bright realms of eternal da[y]. Where we ſhall behold uncreated Beauty; and wi[th] ineffable joy, drink of thoſe rivers of pleaſure whi[ch] flow at God's right hand, for ever and ever.

To conclude,

Dear fellow ſinners;

If ſuch there are, in this ſolemn, this liſteni[ng] Aſſembly; you will not be offended at the plainn[eſs] of this addreſs.

We look upon you with a heart-felt concern; and as ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us; we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to God. We cannot feel indifferent to your immortal intereſts; but knowing the terror of the Lord, we would fain perſuade you, to flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold on the hope ſet before you in the Goſpel. We conſider you as a part of our charge, for whoſe ſouls we watch as thoſe who muſt give account at the great day. If we do it with grief, it muſt be unprofitable for you.

O Sirs, perhaps ſome of you, have almoſt run your race; the ſhadows of the evening begin to ſtretch over you. Some of your laſt ſands are falling: and O!——dreadful to conſider! no preparation for eternity! Has Chriſt Commiſſioned and ſent forth his miniſters to preach the everlaſting Goſpel? Then take heed how you hear; leſt you mourn at laſt and ſay, How have I hated inſtruction, and my heart deſpiſed reproof? And have not obeyed the voice of my *teachers*, nor inclined mine ear to them that inſtructed me? * May you immediately embrace the Saviour, before the pit ſhut its mouth upon you; and the things which concern your everlaſting peace be hidden from your eyes.

Many more there are in this dear aſſembly, who are now in the bloom of life. Who can forbear reminding you of the importance, of remembring your Creator in the days of your youth; and of devoting your early years to his ſervice? You this day behold one of your fellow youth, publicly engaging in the Cauſe of Chriſt; and devoting his ſervice to your beſt intereſts. Deſpiſe not his youth; but as you have opportunity liſten to his inſtructions, and council.

As you my young friends have been favoured with a religious education, and enjoy the bleſſings of a preached Goſpel; your obligations muſt be Great,

* Prov. v, 12, 13.